

# **Michigan**

## **Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Improvement Plan**

### **Progress Report**

**Michigan Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services**

**Submitted to the  
U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Special Education Programs**

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## Introduction

The Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (MDE, OSE/EIS) is committed to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. The Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) has been central to the OSE/EIS planning. The CIMP has provided the context for deeper exploration of the system barriers that impede progress in the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The CIMP has also encouraged the discovery of the root causes of these barriers and the development of an improvement plan to help resolve them.

## Background

In 1999-2000, the MDE engaged in a self-assessment as part of the CIMP. A group of over 130 stakeholders representing all aspects of the Part C and Part B systems conducted this self-assessment. The CIMP Steering Committee, a subset of the large stakeholder group, further refined the findings from the self-assessment. A self-assessment report was completed by the OSE/EIS and submitted to the United States Department of Education, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for review.

The OSEP provided feedback regarding areas of concern they wanted the OSE/EIS to address immediately. These concerns were:

**Part C:** Establish an *Early On* System Review (EOSR) link to component GS1 within the General Supervision cluster, and set a cycle with a specified number of reviews per year.

**Part C:** Review the concern about sufficient numbers of service coordinators and the ability of families to identify their service coordinators. Address the local review process and appropriateness of evaluations within the Natural Environments clusters (CE 1,3,4).

**Part C:** Work on barriers to information, referrals and services as noted in the Comprehensive Public Awareness and Child Find System cluster (CC1).

**Part C:** Address the consistency and timeliness of Transition Plans and options for children not eligible for Part B at age three within the Early Childhood Transition cluster (C/BT1)

**Part B:** Address the following concerns about due process Complaints/Hearings (General Supervision cluster):

- a) hearing officer selection process,
- b) timeliness,
- c) limited ability to track patterns of concerns,
- d) limited use of mediation, and
- e) oversight of corrective actions.

Work began immediately to address these areas of concern. The OSE/EIS submitted an Improvement Plan to the OSEP in December 2001 to begin resolution of the concerns. It was understood that the plan submitted in December was a preliminary plan of action, and that the CIMP Steering Committee would conduct a more in-depth analysis of many of these concerns. The in-depth exploration began in the fall of 2001 and was completed by the spring of 2002. The MDE CIMP Improvement Plan was developed based upon this exploration and submitted to the OSEP July 2002. The Improvement Plan was accepted by the OSEP in October 2002.

This document presents the first Progress Report on the CIMP Improvement Plan. The progress reporting period is August 1, 2002 through November 30, 2002. Only those activities that have a benchmark due within the reporting period are addressed in this Progress Report.

### **The Improvement Planning Context**

The context within which the CIMP Improvement Plan is developed and implemented impacts the ability of the OSE/EIS to carry out the strategic directives established by the CIMP Steering Committee, in both positive and negative ways. Since the submission of the CIMP Improvement Plan in July 2002, a few changes in the improvement planning context have been noted.

#### **1. Ongoing Improvement Planning**

The OSE/EIS continues to convene stakeholder groups to develop strategic directives to be included in the CIMP Improvement Plan. A Design for Results team has been meeting since October 2002 to address the CIMP Steering Committee result area: “Students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards.” Their work will conclude with a set of strategic directives to be presented to the CIMP Steering Committee and the OSE/EIS by March 2003. In January 2003, a new Design for Results team will be convened to set strategic directives for the CIMP Steering Committee result area: “Young adults with disabilities have employment, further education, or other meaningful activities.” Their work is expected to conclude by April 2003. The Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC) continues to provide facilitation support and ongoing technical assistance to the OSE/EIS and the CIMP Steering Committee.

#### **2. SIG Supplemental**

Michigan’s State Improvement Grant (SIG) was awarded supplemental money that will be targeted toward leadership development for administrators. A SIG stakeholder group cited lack of administrator support as one of the key elements in the high turnover of special education personnel. School building leadership is also seen as one of the key components to assuring that students with disabilities

reach challenging educational standards. The supplemental award will help the OSE/EIS move forward in an important improvement area.

### **3. Early Retirements**

An early retirement offer was extended to state employees, including those within the OSE/EIS. This has resulted in the loss of 11 full-time OSE/EIS employees, leaving 36 within the office. As of this progress report, it is unclear how many vacancies will be filled due to budget constraints from revenue shortfalls within the state and resulting in hiring freeze orders.

### **4. Litigation**

The Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services (MPAS) (Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services, Inc. v. Watkins, et al) is challenging the MDE's complaint procedures, requesting, in essence, they be deeper and broader. A number of modifications to the current procedures have been implemented as a result of the ongoing impact of this litigation. There is a dual challenge in the context of this litigation and timeliness/compliance requirements: fewer staff (See 3. Early Retirements) are challenged to 'speed-up' the complaint process, while they are also spending more time going deeper and broader in many investigations.

### **5. State Accountability System and No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

Many of the OSE/EIS staff are involved in internal committee work within the MDE to implement an integrated response to requirements of the No Child Left Behind. In addition, a new state accreditation system, Education YES!, incorporates measures of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and resulting involvement of special education improvement strategies for student performance.

## **Next Steps**

The first annual report on the implementation of the CIMP Improvement Plan will occur in July 2003. At that time, the strategic directives developed by the School-Age and Secondary Transition Design for Results teams will be integrated into the existing CIMP Improvement Plan, resulting in a complete document that addresses all result areas established by the CIMP Steering Committee.



**12/31/02**

**Cluster Area: General Supervision**

**Strategic Directive:** Improve the alternative dispute resolution process. (GS/SD1-02)

**Current Level of Performance:**

The CIMP Steering Committee understands that the dispute resolution system includes both informal and formal mediation. Stakeholders agree that the new system must be based on a culture of deliberate fellowship. Collaboration among educators, students and parents will prevent escalation of many disputes to an adversarial stage.

The MDE, OSE/EIS funds a state discretionary project, The Dispute Resolution Project, to ensure statewide access to mediation at no cost to either party. This project is referred to as “IDEA mediation” throughout the Improvement Plan. The current focus of the Improvement Plan is on improvements to the IDEA mediation system. A number of benchmarks were set for October 1, 2002 and were intended to document the communication that needed to occur between the MDE, OSE/EIS and The Dispute Resolution Project resulting in a revised work plan from the project.

Miscommunication with The Dispute Resolution Project occurred due to inconsistency within the MDE, OSE/EIS grant management processes and procedures (financial and programmatic). Funding for the project, intended to begin October 1, 2002, was not received by the grantee until November 15, 2002, resulting in delayed implementation of improvement strategies.

**Improvement Plan Assumptions:**

- Mediation includes both formal and informal dispute resolution.
- Improving awareness of IDEA mediation will result in increased use of the system.

- Promoting deliberate fellowship among educators, students and parents will increase the use of mediation over complaints and hearings.
- Ensuring the cultural competency of special education mediators will increase the use of mediation.
- Evaluation data will result in information that can be used to improve the IDEA mediation system. Improving the system will result in increased use.
- Extending “stay put” provisions to include mediation cases will result in increased use of the system.
- Providing ongoing support and education to special education mediators will result in improved mediator competency. Improved competency will lead to increased use of mediation.

### **Evidence of Change (Long Term)**

*How will this make a difference for children with disabilities and their families?*

Increased use of mediation will result in a less adversarial system as measured by improved consumer satisfaction ratings and an increase in the number of cancelled hearings

**ACTIVITY: Promote mediation to a wider audience.**

**BENCHMARK: Draft revised mediation procedures. (D1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

Revision completed 08/02.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The mediation procedures were revised and available for a period of public review and comment. Public comment ended 10/31/02. Revisions to the procedures were made and presented to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) in December 2002.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None

**ACTIVITY: Promote mediation to a wider audience.**

**BENCHMARK: Complete public review and proposed revisions to mediation procedures. (D2)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

Public review completed 10/31/02. Revisions presented to the SEAC 12/02.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

This work is proceeding along the timeline as expected. The SEAC will discuss the revisions to the mediation procedures in January 2003 and will take action on them in February 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.



**ACTIVITY: Promote a sense of deliberate fellowship among the educators, students and parents.**

**BENCHMARK: The Dispute Resolution project will promote combined awareness training sessions for mediation (parents and providers trained together). (E1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The State Court Administrative Office (SCAO)/Michigan Special Education Mediation Program (MSEMP) included the following strategy in its September 2002 grant application: “Begin to provide presentations and workshops to combined audiences of parents and providers.”

Although beyond the November 30, 2002 reporting period, SCAO/MSEMP also added the following language (to the listing of potential audiences for workshops/presentation) in its Letters of Understanding offered to the mediation centers the first week of “December 2002: “...and/or combined school/parent special education audiences...” Also, in the second week of December 2002, SCAO/MSEMP staff verbally presented to a meeting of the mediation center directors the concept that Michigan “Department of Education (MDE) has included in its CIMP plan the interest in “combined awareness training sessions for mediation (parents and providers trained together).”

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The CIMP plan includes a timeline for this activity of October 2002. The September 2002, SCAO/MSEMP grant application which first contained the above-stated proposal is for the period of October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- This activity should be reported on annually.
- MSEMP requests that MDE clarify its expectations regarding the CIMP plan components.

**ACTIVITY:** Refine the current IDEA mediation system to include “attractive” and “effective” components built on a commitment to build or rebuild “deliberate fellowship”.

**BENCHMARK:** Data collection of combined and single audience training sessions will be initiated. (E2)

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE:** 10/02

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The MSEMP included the following statement of the data to be collected in its September 2002 grant application: “Numbers of presentations/workshops to a combined audiences (will begin during 2002-2003 grant year).”

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The CIMP plan includes a timeline for this activity of October 2002. The September 2002, SCAO/MSEMP grant application which first contained the above-stated proposal is for the period of October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- MSEMP requests that MDE clarify its expectations regarding the CIMP plan components.

**ACTIVITY: Ensure the cultural competency of the IDEA mediation system.**

**BENCHMARK: Establish a diverse advisory committee through the Dispute Resolution Project to review products and processes for cultural competency. (EE1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The MSEMP included the following strategy in its September 2002 grant application: “If requested by MDE, participate in conversations about attaining the CIMP Plan outcome that ‘a racially and ethnically proportionate number of families use IDEA mediation for dispute resolution.’”

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The CIMP plan includes a timeline for this activity of October 2002. The September 2002, SCAO/MSEMP grant application which first contained the above-stated proposal is for the period of October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- This activity should be reported on annually.
- MSEMP requests that MDE clarify its expectations regarding the CIMP plan components.

**ACTIVITY: Ensure the cultural competency of the IDEA mediation system.**

**BENCHMARK: Add race and ethnicity data to the mediation participant data presently collected by the grantee. (EE2)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The MSEMP included the following statement of the data to be collected in its September 2002 grant application: “Unknown at this time. To produce baseline information, MSEMP is exploring mechanisms for collecting ethnicity data.”

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The CIMP plan includes a timeline for this activity of October 2002. The September 2002, SCAO/MSEMP grant application which first contained the above-stated proposal is for the period of October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- This activity should be reported on annually.
- MSEMP requests that MDE clarify its expectations regarding the CIMP plan components.

**MICHIGAN  
OSE/EIS  
CIMP Reporting Period 8/1/02 – 11/30/02  
PROGRESS REPORT**



**12/31/02  
Cluster Area: General Supervision**

**Strategic Directive:** Improve the effectiveness of the complaint process. (GS/SD2-02)

**Current Level of Performance:**

The timeliness of complaint investigations has been a concern of the CIMP Steering Committee, the MDE, OSE/EIS staff and the OSEP. Timely investigations have been impacted by the complexity of the issues within a complaint, difficulty obtaining needed information, inadequate documentation of timelines, and a lack of personnel. The CIMP Steering Committee recommended that the OSE/EIS revise internal office complaint procedures and reporting to improve public understanding of issues and improve understanding of patterns of concern through consistent reporting. It was proposed that oversight and technical assistance increase and that the two tier complaint system be studied.

<b>Complaint Data</b>	01/01/01 to 11/16/01	01/01/02 to 06/30/02	07/01/02 to 11/30/02
Number of cases closed	274	122	97
Closed within timeline	165 (60.2%)	85 (69.7%)	72 (74.2%)
Closed beyond timeline	109 (39.8%)	37 (31.3%)	25 (25.8%)

Of the 25 cases that were closed beyond the timeline, case managers cited the following reasons: in eleven (11) cases, the ISD exceeded the timeline; in seven (7) cases “complexity” was cited; in three (3) cases the large number of allegations were cited; in six (6) cases the FAPE priority of other cases was cited; and in five (5) cases no explanation was provided.

**Improvement Plan Assumptions:**

- Revised procedures for managing complaints will improve the timeliness of investigations.
- Consistent reporting of data to stakeholders will result in their improved understanding of the timeliness issues related to complaint investigations.
- Increased visibility of and attention to timeliness as an issue will improve the timeliness of investigations.
- Evaluation of the efficacy of a one tier v. two-tier complaint system may yield further information critical to improvement of the complaint system.

**Evidence of Change (Long Term)**

*How will this make a difference for children with disabilities and their families?*

Timely resolution of complaints will result in timely implementation of early intervention services in the natural environment and free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for infants, toddlers children and youth with disabilities as measured by the time line data.

**ACTIVITY: Gather and report data on the complexity of complaint cases.**

**BENCHMARK: Finalize and codify “complexity” criteria. (C1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

“Complicating” has been selected to replace “complexity.” The “Criteria for Complicating Factors” has been drafted and was to be finalized on 11/7/02, but a case manager raised concerns about some of the items. The document is currently with the supervisor. In the interim, case managers are using a previous format as they close cases.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

Defining “Criteria for Complicating Factors” is difficult, but very important. If “complicating” is defined too precisely, the list of items becomes too numerous, making it unmanageable and impractical. If it is defined too broadly, it loses its descriptive value. Therefore, it makes sense to take the extra time, and, reflecting on experience with current cases, to define “complicating” carefully.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- Change the wording of activity and benchmark to reflect “complicating” rather than “complexity”.
- Adjust timeline to 2/03
- Identify the timeline for full implementation of a definition of “complicating” as 6/03.(New C6)

**ACTIVITY: Gather and report data on the complexity of complaint cases.**

**BENCHMARK: Initiate baseline data collection. (C2)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

“Complicating” has been selected to replace “complexity.” The “Criteria for Complicating Factors” has been drafted and was to be finalized on 11/7/02, but a case manager raised concerns about some of the items. The document is currently with the supervisor. In the interim, case managers are using a previous format as they close cases.

Using a description of “complexity” (that was used until the process described in C1 was initiated), the following data were collected:

The total number of cases closed:	97
The number closed within the timeline:	72
The number closed over the timeline:	25
The number over, with “complicating” as 1 reason:	7

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

Case managers are using a definition of “complicating” that is not very specific; it is consistent with the definition that will eventually be selected, but the current definition is not as descriptive as desired.



After reviewing the data, it appears that:

- The use of “complicating” is inconsistent across case managers;
- As long as the data collection task remains a manual one that the case manager completes, the data will be less reliable (when clerical personnel are entering the data into the data base software, the data base will have greater validity and reliability)
- When the definition of “complicating” is finalized, the case managers will require training in understanding how all of the internal office procedures related to data collection interface with one another.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- Change the wording of the activity to reflect “complicating” rather than “complexity”.
- Extend timeline for defining “complicating” to 2/03
- Set a timeline for completion of training case managers as 6/03 (See CC14)
- Identify the timeline for full implementation of a definition of “complicating” as 6/03 (See C6)

**ACTIVITY: Gather and report data regarding timeline extensions. Take action when extensions occur for insufficient reasons.**

**BENCHMARK: Establish criteria for sufficient/insufficient reasons for timeline extensions. (CC1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The primary purpose of this activity is not to identify the exceptional circumstances for why a case exceeded the timeline (“exceptional circumstances” and exceeding the timeline are incongruous). Rather, the primary purpose (in sequence) is: 1) To develop a set of descriptors to identify the circumstances that are not exceptional; 2) To apply those descriptors to cases; and 3) To identify strategies to reduce and eliminate timeline overages that are not due to exceptional circumstances.

The document that describes the criteria for identifying when a timeline overage did not meet the threshold of exceptional circumstances is also the same document described above in C1. Again, the criteria have been drafted and were to be finalized on 11/7/02, but a case manager raised concerns about some of the items. The document is currently with the supervisor. In the interim, case managers are using a previous format as they close cases.

Using a description of “unexceptional” circumstances (that was used until the process described in C1 was initiated), the following data was collected:

The total number of cases closed:	97
The number closed within the timeline:	72
The number closed that exceeded the timeline:	25
The number over, with an “unexceptional circumstance” as 1 reason:	17
The number over, with no reason:	5
The number over, with reasons that will be subsequently redefined:	10
The number I/C that would have been O/C, previously	3

## **B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

Defining when a case did not meet any criteria for exceptional circumstances is not as difficult as defining “Criteria for Complicating Factors,” but they are interdependent and their articulation must proceed in tandem. Therefore, it makes sense to take the extra time, and, reflecting on experience with current cases, to define criteria for not “unexceptional” circumstances carefully.

There are cases when the overages are due to multiple reasons, which explains why there are 32 descriptors for 25 the cases that exceeded the timeline.

Under the current format, case managers used 5 descriptors to identify “unexceptional circumstances.” However, only 3 of the 5 descriptors clearly relate to unexceptional circumstances:

- When the ISD exceeded the 21-calendar day time (and the case went over the 60-calendar day timeline); and/or
- When the ISD report was incomplete and had to be remanded to the ISD for re-investigation; and/or
- When the case went over the 60-calendar day timeline because of the OSE/EIS decision about FAPE priority of another case.

Data from these 3 descriptors are grouped together above in the 17 overages related to unexceptional circumstances (11 overages involved the ISD exceeding the 21-calendar day timeline; 6 involved FAPE priority; none was due to an incomplete ISD investigation report). Under the current format, there are 2 descriptors (“numerous” and “complex”) that case managers have grouped under unexceptional circumstances, but will more appropriately be grouped as “complicating factors.” They are cited above as data that will be subsequently redefined. There were 5 overages when the case manager did not identify a reason for the overage.

Case managers are using a definition of “unexceptional circumstances” that will be re-defined. After reviewing the data, it appears that:

- The use of “unexceptional circumstances” is inconsistent across case managers;

- As long as the data collection task remains a manual one that the case manager completes, the data will be less reliable (when clerical personnel are entering the data into the data base software, the data base will have greater validity and reliability)
- When the definitions of “complicating” and “unexceptional circumstances” are finalized, the case managers will require training in understanding how these terms and all of the internal office procedures related to data collection interface with one another.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- Extend timeline for defining “unexceptional circumstances” to 2/03
- Set a timeline for completion of training case managers as 6/03( See CC14)
- Identify the timeline for full implementation of a definition of “unexceptional circumstances” as 6/03 (See CC15)

**ACTIVITY: Gather and report data regarding timeline extensions. Take action when extensions occur for insufficient reasons.**

**BENCHMARK: Initiate data collection. (CC2)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

### **1. Activity Progress to Date:**

The document that describes the criteria for identifying when a timeline overage did not meet the threshold of exceptional circumstances is also the same document described above in C1. Again, the criteria has been drafted was to be finalized on 11/7/02, but a case manager raised concerns about some of the items. The document is currently with the supervisor. In the interim, case managers are using a previous format as they close cases.

Using a description of “unexceptional” circumstances (that was used until the process described in C1 was initiated), the following data was collected:

The total number of cases closed:	97
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The number over, with no reason:	5
The number over, with reasons that will be subsequently redefined:	10
The number I/C that would have been O/C, previously	3

## **2. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress**

There are cases when the overages are due to multiple reasons, which explains why there are 32 descriptors for 25 overages.

Under the current format, case managers used 5 descriptors to identify “unexceptional circumstances.” However, only 3 of the 5 descriptors clearly relate to unexceptional circumstances, as follows:

- When the ISD exceeded the 21-calendar day time (and the case went over the 60-calendar day timeline); and/or
- When the ISD report was incomplete and had to be remanded to the ISD for re-investigation; and/or
- When the case went over the 60-calendar day timeline because of the OSE/EIS decision about FAPE priority of another case.

Data from these 3 descriptors are grouped together above in the 17 overages related to unexceptional circumstances (11 overages involved the ISD exceeding the 21-calendar day timeline; 6 involved FAPE priority; none was due to an incomplete ISD investigation report). Under the current format, there are 2 descriptors (“numerous” and “complex”) that case managers have grouped under unexceptional circumstances, but will more appropriately be grouped as “complicating factors.” They are cited above as data that will be subsequently redefined. There were 5 overages when the case manager did not identify a reason for the overage.

Case managers are using a definition of “unexceptional circumstances” that will be re-defined. After reviewing the data, it appears that:

- The use of “unexceptional circumstances” is inconsistent across case managers;
- As long as the data collection task remains a manual one that the case manager completes, the data will be less reliable (when clerical personnel are entering the data into the data base software, the data base will have greater validity and reliability)
- When the definitions of “complicating” and “unexceptional circumstances” are finalized, the case managers will require training in understanding how these terms and all of the internal office procedures related to data collection interface with one another.

## **3. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

- Extend timeline for defining “unexceptional circumstances” to 2/03
- Set a timeline for completion of training case managers as 6/03 (See CC14)
- Identify the timeline for full implementation of a definition of “exceptional circumstances” as 6/03 (See CC15)

**ACTIVITY: Gather and report data regarding timeline extensions. Take action when extensions occur for insufficient reasons.**

**BENCHMARK: Hire additional complaint investigators and secretary. (CC3)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**1. Activity Progress to Date:**

The job descriptions for the complaint investigators have been written. The justification/demonstration of need has also been prepared. All documentation has been forwarded to Human Resources. The secretary position is not in the OSE/EIS spending plan.

In addition, one case manager took an early retirement in late October. No one replaced him, but he was subsequently brought back under a contract in early December.

**2. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

For a variety of reasons, including activities required in this commitment to improve the effectiveness of the complaint process, as well as the pending court action with MPAS, the amount of time required to manage each case has increased significantly. It is impossible to manage these responsibilities with existing resources.

**3. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

Extend benchmark completion date to 02/03.

**12/31/02  
Cluster Area: Birth to Five**

**Strategic Directive:** Systems reform through policy and funding. (B-5/SD1)

**Current Level of Performance:**

Throughout the development of the CIMP Improvement Plan, stakeholders pointed to insufficient system capacity (including limited fiscal and human resources) as causal for many of the areas of concern. While at times much emphasis was put on the need for increased funding, a shared understanding emerged around the need for system reform through improved collaboration, shared technical assistance, and increased funding. Improving collaboration among existing systems will greatly enhance the systems capacity.

**Improvement Plan Assumptions:**

- Barriers to the delivery of EIS in the NE are interagency in nature and require policy and funding alignment.
- Fiscal reforms will result in improved service coordination and services provided in natural environments.

**Evidence of Change (Long Term)**

*How will this make a difference for children with disabilities and their families?*

A coordinated system of services will assist in providing infants and toddlers and their families with early intervention services in the natural environments.



**ACTIVITY: Adopt funding and service provision policies and guidelines across agencies that support EIS in the NE.**

**BENCHMARK: Conduct a statewide conference for LICCs to address EIS in the NE. (AA1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 10/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The *Early On* LICC Conference was held in October 2002. A total of 257 people attended the “Leaders Working Together for a Bountiful Harvest”. Providing early intervention services in the natural environment was presented in a specific workshop and embedded throughout all of the information discussed throughout the conference. A total of 43 of 57 intermediate school districts were represented at the conference. In addition, there were representatives from over eight different agency categories.

Work to create an Implementation Guide to Natural Environments began in May 2002. The guide is intended for service providers who are working with families in *Early On* and will be used in conjunction with training offered by the *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance (EOT&TA) grantee.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The Improvement Planning phase of the CIMP process identified the need to provide the field additional guidance on early intervention services in the natural environment. The EOT&TA grantee was informed of the need and requested to embed the principles and philosophy of natural environment in offered training. A total of 244 people have participated in early intervention training embedded with the natural environment principles.

The Implementation Guide will provide support to providers and result in more children receiving early intervention services in the natural environments.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.

**ACTIVITY:** Study service coordination models (at local, state and national levels) to determine how to best provide service coordination in specific geographic areas.

**BENCHMARK:** An SICC sub-committee collects various models for service coordination through consultation with NEC-TAC and OSEP. (B1)

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE:** 11/02

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The SICC subcommittee, Effective Practices and Implementation, Birth to Five, collected information on various models of service coordination. The Committee also studied the *Early On* Evaluation Project's study on service coordination. An analysis will be done to determine which model(s) are most successful in providing adequate support to families. The subcommittee had an in-service by a member of *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance (EOT&TA) on the Tools for Professional Development maps. The training focused on the competencies needed for a service coordinator.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The CIMP Self-Assessment process and the Improvement Planning phase indicated a need to determine if there are a sufficient number of service coordinators to support families receiving early intervention services in natural environments.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.

**MICHIGAN  
OSE/EIS  
CIMP Reporting Period 8/1/02 – 11/30/02  
PROGRESS REPORT**



**12/31/02  
Cluster Area: Birth to Five**

**Strategic Directive:** Strengthen and coordinate training and personnel development to uniformly achieve state quality standards. (B-5/SD3)

**Current Level of Performance:**

The OSE/EIS established a grant, *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance (EOT&TA) with focus on in-service training of *Early On* personnel. The grantee is collaborating with the *Early On* partner agencies. Three new personnel development activities were initiated in 2002, an annual *Early On* conference, semi-annual institutes for new personnel, and an annual Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) Conference. The Tools for Personnel Development (TDP), a competency based personnel development tool, was introduced at the *Early On* Conference and were also presented at the LICC Conference and the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Conference. The Grand Valley State University is developing an interdisciplinary curriculum to share with other institutes of higher education through a grant from the OSE/EIS. The Part C to Part B transition standards have been developed and reviewed through a period of public comment.

**Improvement Plan Assumptions:**

- Competency based training of EO personnel will result in higher quality services for infants and toddlers with special needs and their families.
- Developing transition standards, providing training on the standards and monitoring their implementation will improve the consistency and timeliness of transition plans.

**Evidence of Change (Long Term)**

*How will this make a difference for children with disabilities and their families?*

Children with disabilities and their families will receive early intervention support from well-prepared personnel.

**ACTIVITY: Develop and implement standards for Part C to Part B transition for use by Part C and Part B monitors.**

**BENCHMARK: Release the Part C to Part B transition standards for public review and input. (A1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 08/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

An advisory group of monitors drafted Part C to B transition standards. In July, a representative field group reviewed and provided additional comments on the drafted standards. In August, the Part C to Part B transition standards went out for formal public comment. The public comment period was extended to October 31, 2002. Very few substantive comments were received.

The creation of a Transition Guide began in August 2002. The guide is designed for *Early On* personnel who will be working with children and families. It will explain the process of transition as well as list the federal requirements.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The transition standards will provide guidance to the field on conducting quality transitions. The transition standards will also serve as a model for transition from Part C for children not eligible for Part B.

The Transition Guide will provide guidance to *Early On* personnel, so that children and families receive accurate, timely information regarding transition.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.

**ACTIVITY:** Develop the pre-service and in-service training curriculum for *Early On* personnel and families to address the competencies.

**BENCHMARK:** Promote the use of Tools for Personnel Development (TPD) Project information through public awareness and *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance (EOT&TA). (F1)

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE:** 10/02

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

The EOT&TA grantee provided follow-up awareness and training on the TPD. Requests for additional information and copies of the CD-ROM have been fulfilled since the April *Early On* Conference. During the month of September, regional meetings were held to provide additional information on the tools. Another workshop was offered at the Local Interagency Coordinating Council Conference in October.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

The Tools for Personnel Development have been well received. The TPD provides guidance for individual, ongoing personnel development based on the roles and responsibilities in an early intervention system of services. The EOT & TA project presented the TPD project at the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Conference in San Diego December 4 – 8, 2002. The information was well received and will be connected nationally via NECTAC.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.

**12/31/02  
Cluster Area: Birth to Five**

**Strategic Directive:** Public Awareness: Engage the public and our partners. (B-5/SD4)

**Current Level of Performance:**

Data have improved significantly over the past five years on the percentage of specific referral sources that are reported to the MDE, OSE/EIS. At this time, the referral sources are known for about 72% of the children and families served by *Early On*. The most frequent referral source is Public Health (16.1%), followed by other collaborating agencies (16%), hospitals (15%), families (9.7%) and education agencies (9.4%). Physician referrals have decreased by about 50% over the past three years, from about 500 to about 250, while hospital referrals have more than doubled, from about 900 to about 2400. Social Services (FIA) referrals have also more than doubled, from about 200 to about 500.

A new public awareness campaign has been developed and presented to the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for its approval. It will be available to local service areas in January 2003.

**Improvement Plan Assumptions:**

- Increasing awareness of Child Find responsibilities locally will result in improved Child Find.
- Providing models and promoting evaluation tools will improve the quality of developmental evaluations for infants, toddlers and their families.



**Evidence of Change (Long Term)**

*How will this make a difference for children with disabilities and their families?*

Infants and toddlers with special needs and their families will have timely access to an interagency system of effective supports and services as measured by evaluation, monitoring and MI-CIS data.

**ACTIVITY: Inform all primary referral sources of their responsibility to complete Child Find activities.**

**BENCHMARK: A Child Find public awareness campaign is developed. (D1)**

**TIMELINE COMPLETION DATE: 09/02**

**A. Activity Progress to Date:**

In July 2002, a grant was awarded to develop a comprehensive marketing plan/public awareness campaign. The marketing plan was delivered on September 30, 2002. *Early On* grantees reviewed the marketing plan in October 2002. A presentation to the SICC was given November 15, 2002, where product demos were shared. The products were developed in three languages; English, Spanish, and Arabic.

**B. Explanation and Analysis of Activity Progress:**

It had been years since a new coordinated marketing campaign was developed and implemented for *Early On*. SICC members felt a new campaign was needed. The campaign designed was well received. Steps will be taken to implement various pieces of the campaign developed through the *Early On* public awareness, information and referral grantee. All materials will be available to local *Early On* systems by electronic format January 2003.

**C. Proposed Adjustments to Activity:**

None.





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Birth to Five12/02 Progress Report		2002					2003												2004												2005
		Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
	TRAINING AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT																														
	B-5/SD3-02																														
	Oversight (A)																														
	A1 Release the Part C to Part B transition standards for public review and input.	A1																													
	A2 Revise EOSR (monitoring) Part C to Part B forms to include transition standards						A2																								
	A3 Provide training on standards for Part C to Part B transition								A3																						
	A4 Part C to Part B transition standards are in use for children eligible and those not found eligible for Part B.										A4																				
	A5 Develop preschool to Kindergarten transition guidelines.												A5																		
	A6 Disseminate guidelines to the field.															A6															
	Evaluation (B)																														
	B1 Individual needs assessment are available through the Capabilities Project.																														
	Training and technical assistance is offered and material made available based on stated needs						B1																								
	B2 EO Personnel Needs assessment is included as part of Biennial Service Coordinator survey.																B2														
	Evaluation (BB)																														
	BB1 NEC-TAC will consult to identify appropriate evaluation models.										BB1																				
	BB2 Identify service areas that meet 45-day timeline based on data collected via MI-CIS.												BB2																		
	BB3 Detail best practices used to meet 45-day timeline.																BB3														
	BB4 Disseminate information to the field through the Early On Conference																					BB4									
	BB5on Annual: Report progress to SICC and the CIMP Steering Committee.											X											X								
	BB6 on Ongoing: Conduct technical assistance to inform / train evaluators																														
	BB7 on Ongoing: Interagency partners promote diverse evaluation tools accepted by Early On.																														
	BB8 on Ongoing: Interagency partners promote early intervention materials and trainings within their agencies																														
	Sustained Learning (F)																														
	F1 Promote the use of Capabilities Project information through public awareness.					F1																									
	F2 Public awareness grantee conducts parent training's based on the parent capabilities.								F2																						
	F3 GVSU develops the preservice curriculum											F3																			
	F4 EO T&TA project develops the inservice training curriculum											F4																			
	F5 Parent TPD will be completed and disseminated.																F5														
	Sustained Learning (FF)																														
	FF1 Research based information on EIS in the NE is developed.											FF1																			
	FF2 Disseminate EIS in the NE information to stakeholders.													FF2																	
	FF3 Develop sustained learning offerings for the provision of EIS in the NE.													FF3																	
	Annual: Report data to the SICC and the CIMP Steering Committee. (FF4)											X											X								
	Ongoing: EQSR and MI-CIS collect data on EIS in the NE. (CC5on)																														
																		</													

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General Supervision 12/02 Progress Report											2002					2003								2004												2005
											Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION																																				
GS/SD1-02																																				
Oversight (A)																																				
A1 Revise special education rules to include "stay-put".															A1																					
A2 Public comment is hold. Input results in revisions																A2																				
A3 Special education rules include mediation "stay-put".																			A3																	
Evaluation (B)																																				
B1 Develop evaluation design in concert w/ dispute resolution project grantee.															B1																					
B2 Develop & fund evaluation implementation plan																B2																				
B3 Collect & report baseline evaluation data																			B3																	
B4 Modify work plan of dispute resolution project grantee.																					B4															
Evaluation (BB)																																				
BB1on-Ongoing: Continue current participant evaluation conducted by mediation grantee w/revisions & additions as needed																																				
BB2on-Annual: Report data reported to key special education stakeholders.																			X						X											
BB3on-Ongoing: Use data for continuous improvement of the mediation system.																																				
Awareness and Dissemination(D)																																				
D1 Draft mediation procedures												D1																								
D2 Complete public review of mediation procedures													D2																							
D3 Finalize mediation procedures															D3																					
D4 Integrate mediation procedures into existing mediation training curriculum																																				
D5 Public Awareness &dispute resolution project grantees consultation creates information dissemination plan																			D4 D5																	
D6 Dissemination plan implemented w/SIG assistance																					D6															
D7on Ongoing: Report mediation successes through The CEN Newslne, or other statewide publications that reach special education stakeholders, according to their publication schedule(s)																																				
Capacity Building (E)																																				
E1 Promote & collect data on combined parent & provider mediation awareness trng																																				
E2 Data collection of combined & single audience training sessions initiated.														E2					X						X											
E3on Annually: Report data reported to key special education stakeholders.													X										X							X						
E4on Ongoing: Use data for continuous improvement of the mediation system.																																				
Capacity Building (EE)																																				
EE1 Establish diverse advisory comm. through mediation grantee (cultural competency products & processes reviewer)																																				
EE2 Add race and ethnicity data to mediation participant data																																				
EE3 Establish race and ethnicity data baseline re: mediation use																																				
EE4 Report race and ethnicity data re: special education mediators																																				
EE5 Report proportionality analysis by ethnicity among mediation users																																				
EE6on Annually: Report data reported to key special education stakeholders.																																				
EE7on Ongoing: Revise products & processes based on advisory committee recommendations																																				
EE8on Ongoing: Use data for continuous improvement of mediation system																																				
Sustained Learning (F)																																				
F1 SIG & mediation grantee consult on mediator sustained learning model															F1																					
F2 SIG recommend & fund sustained learning model & evaluation																F2																				
F3 Disseminate evaluation report to key special education stakeholders																																				
																			</																	





General Supervision					2002					2003										2004											
					Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug		Sept